STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SAN FRANCISCO BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
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November 3, 1992

Mr. Andrew Lincoff
United States Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Subject: Marine Remedial Investigation And Feasibility Study For The United Heckathorn Superfund Site In Richmond, Contra Costa County

Dear Mr. Lincoff:

I am writing in response to your request for comments on the draft workplan for the marine remedial investigation and feasibility study (RI/FS Study), dated October 15, 1992, regarding the United Heckathorn Superfund Site in Richmond, Contra Costa County, prepared by Battelle Marine Sciences Laboratory for the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). We share the USEPA's interest to expeditiously clean up the site, and approve of the your efforts to coordinate the remediation with the Richmond Harbor deepening project proposed by the Port of Richmond and the US Army Corps of Engineers. Although the Commission itself has not reviewed the RI/FS Study, these comments are based on the Commission's law, the McAteer-Petris Act, its San Francisco Bay Plan, and the federal Coastal Zone Management Act.

We are concerned that all the remediation alternatives proposed to be considered in the RI/FS Study involve disposal of the material in the Bay. As you know, under the federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) all federal activities in San Francisco Bay must be consistent with the Commission's federally-approved management program. Under the management program the Commission can allow fill in the Bay to dispose of the DDT contaminated material only under very restrictive circumstances. The Commission would need to first find that the project is either necessary to the health safety and welfare of the *entire* Bay Area, or that the disposal is part of an approved fill for a water-oriented use. In either case, the Commission would need to be able to conclude that upland disposal alternatives are infeasible. Without adequate information on the availability and feasibility of upland disposal alternatives, it would be impossible for the Commission to determine the consistency of the proposed project with its law and policy. Therefore, in order to ensure that the remediation of the Lauritzen Canal proceeds expeditiously, the study should be amended to include one or more potential upland disposal options. We believe that our staff has stated this position consistently throughout its involvement in the Lauritzen Canal DDT site cleanup efforts.

Feasibility of potential disposal options will include engineering, environmental, public health, and economic considerations. However, it is important to note that the Commission does not consider an alternative infeasible simply because it is not the least-cost alternative. The staff believes that the parties responsible for such egregious contamination of San Francisco Bay should be required to pay the cost of remediating the problem in such a way that Bay resources are not adversely affected.

We are also concerned with the proposed modeling task, which is intended to analyze dispersion of DDT-contaminated sediments from the site if no further remedial action is taken. Movement of sediments in San Francisco Bay is a little studied and complex problem. From the

information in the document, we cannot determine whether the modeling would provide useful information. In order to obtain accurate and defensible estimates of contaminant migration, the modeling would likely be an extensive and expensive undertaking. We frankly do not see the need for such extensive efforts. You can conclude that the no action alternative is unacceptable without undertaking modeling studies, because the DDT contamination will be available to Bay fish and wildlife and threaten human health regardless of how contamination migrates through the harbor.

We further request that the RI/FS Study put a strong emphasis on (1) identifying the potential adverse impacts to the Bay resulting from the various remediation options, (2) presenting proposed mitigation measures for any identified significant adverse impacts, and (3) analyzing the assurance of long-term containment afforded by each option. As stated previously, we request that the study include and analyze upland disposal options.

We realize that the RI/FS study is a technical document and is not intended to analyze and discuss policy and regulatory issues. We are available to work with the USEPA to prepare a remedial plan that is consistent with the Commission's law and policies and that will result in an expeditious and thorough cleanup of the contaminated sediments. Thank you for requesting our comments on the RI/FS Study.

Sincerely,

STEVEN GOLDBECK
Coastal Program Manager

SG/gg

cc: Port of Richmond
Regional Board, Tom Gandesbery